The Beſt Foundation.

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE

OF A

DISCOURSE

Delivered in

BIDDIFORD in DEVONSHIRE,

In the YEAR 1744

By JOHN CENNICK.

Behold I lay in Zion for a Foundation a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-ſtone, a ſure Foundation, ISAIAH xxviii. 16.

Other Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt, 1 COR. iii. 11.

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The Beſt Foundation.

MATT. vii. 24.

Whoſoever heareth theſe Sayings of mine and doth them, I will liken him to a wiſe Man which built his Houſe upon a Rock, and the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock: and every one that heareth theſe Sayings of mine and doth them not, ſhall be likened unto a fooliſh Man which built his Houſe upon the Sand, and the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

THIS is the Concluſion of our *Saviour's* Sermon upon the Mount, and ſerves to teach us how careful we ſhould be to have our Hope of eternal Life well grounded, and our Foundation laid ſure, leſt in a time of Trial we ſhould fail, and all our Chriſtianity and Religion, like a Struc-

ture ill founded, ſhould totter and fall, and leave us miſerable for ever and ever.

This has certainly been the ſad Caſe with many who in their Life-time would have it, they were well enough, were angry if any did but venture to queſtion their Safety, their Knowledge in the Myſtery of Godlineſs, or Experience of Grace, till perhaps the Strokes of Death, or the near Approach of Eternity ſhook their Building, and they felt with Horror and Diſtreſs that they had only *built on Sand*, and with all their Boaſts and falſe Righteouſneſs, have trembled to ſee all fall, and *vaniſh away as the Smoke out of the Chimney*.

In this weightieſt of Matters we cannot be too ſecure and ſafe, let us therefore conſider the Words of our *Saviour*, and learn of him, *who built all Things, to lay our Foundation on a Rock*, that none of the Dangers he mentions may come nigh us, and that in his Day we may be called *wiſe*, and be found worthy, when Heaven and Earth ſhall flee away and be ſhaken terribly, *to ſtand before the Son of Man*.

I know how very ready many Aſſertors and Propagators of the Doctrine of our own Righteouſneſs, are to make this Text ſerve them; for, ſay they, *The Wiſdom of the good Builder conſiſts in his having* done *all our* Saviour's *Sayings, and not in hearing or believing only*; and hereby ſome unwarily can be brought to doubt of the true Doctrine of Free Juſtification through the Grace and Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, and ſo build with the untempered Mortar of their own works and Merits, till the Day of Trial, and then all muſt fall, *and great ſhall be the Fall of it*, for Body and Soul ſhall fall into Hell, yea all, whatever is not built upon *Chriſt* and his Merits, ſhall not ſtand; all elſe is Sand, however ſpecious and good in Mens Eyes, and ſo ſhall be found in he *Day of Judgment*.

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In this Diſcourſe of our *Saviour*'s, one thing is to be obſerved, and that is, that leſt, amidſt all his Precepts and Inſtructions (of which this Sermon is full) his Diſciples ſhould miſunderſtand him, and think their beſt Obedience to theſe ſhould be the Ground of their Acceptance with *God*, he ſays, *but firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe Things ſhall be added unto you*, Matt. vi. 33.

As if he would have ſaid, *My Diſciples, I have now ſpoken my Mind, and what alſo is my Father's Will: After this Manner ſhould you think, and thus ſpeak, behave, live, and do, but then be wiſe, and like a Builder who is going to build, he firſt digs deep and finds the Rock, and then lays his Foundation ſure, and builds ſafely; ſo ye, firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God that is in you, and his Righteouſneſs, thisi s your Rock and Foundation, before all Things get this, and you ſhall build ſafely all other Bleſſings ſhall be given you over and above, but till you have found this you are not right and ſhould you go on to build you would be like fooliſh Men, who without a Foundation build upon the Sand. Ye hear my Sayings, do as I bid you, firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, for many will hear theſe ſayings of mine and go away; firſt they will attempt to do works in their own Strength, and ſo make a Righteouſneſs of their own and dream of having my Righteouſneſs to help out and make up the Deficiency of theirs, and ſo, without a Foundation, build upon Sand, and have all they do fall and burn up in the Day that ſhall try all them that dwell upon the Earth*

Our *Saviour* will not let *a Piece of his new Cloth*, his Righteouſneſs, which is everlaſting and without Fault before the Throne, and which was wrought out and finiſhed with ſo many Years of Pain and Labour, go to *mend our old Garment*, or patch up the *filthy Rags* of our Righteouſneſs. He that cannot, and will

will not trust the Obedience of *Christ*, the Righteousness of the *Son of God*, he may do what he will, he may build as he pleases, and make all Men admire his wonderful Works, and as sure as he lives he shall see all fall; for all is built upon Sand, and without a Foundation.

This is not the only Place in the Scriptures where our Saviour and his Righteousness is called a Rock, or Foundation; for even in the *Prophets* and in the *Psalms* He was preached as *the Rock of Ages*; and so *Moses* taught the Children of *Israel*, and *David* so sung in the Congregation of *God*, *Deut.* xxxii. 4, 15. *Psal.* lxxi. 3. lxii. 2, *&c.*

Isaiah also had done the same when he said, *Thus saith the Lord God, behold I lay in Sion for a Foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-stone, a sure Foundation*, Isa. xxviii. 16.

This was the Rock *Peter* confessed when he said to our Saviour, *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.* Our Saviour says, *upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*, Matt. xvi. 18.

St. *Paul* says, there is no other Foundation, *Other Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus*, 1 Cor. iii. 11. And St. *Peter* applies that Place of the *Psalms* to *Christ*, *This is the Stone which was set at nought by you Builders, which is become the Head Stone in the Corner*, Acts, iv. 11. It should not surprise us that to some this Rock is *an Offence, and a Stone of stumbling*, to all self-righteous People he will be so to the End of the World. The Doctrine of his Merits, his Divinity, and Righteousness, will for ever be discarded by such who have never seen through the Deceitfulness of our Performances and Duties, nor known how Sin has mingled with and spoiled all our *holy Things*; but to the *poor*

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in Spirit, to such as feel their fallen State, and whose Eyes are open to their own Misery, him and his Righteousness will be precious, dearer than Silver or fine Gold, yea more precious and sweet than Honey or the Honey-comb.

A Soul who is wise to eternal Life, is properly likened by our dear Master to a *Builder*. Should one go about to build a House which he would have stand some hundred Years, he would first *dig deep*, he would not value any Pains to come at the solid Ground, the *firm Rock*, nor would he count it lost Time to make this sure, but having found this, he could go on safely. So also is it with a sincere Man; he will not be cheated with the *Form of Godliness*, he will not any more think, *if I do all the Good I can that is sufficient, and should I fail at last, I hope Christ's Righteousness shall make up the rest*, for this would be indeed to make our Works *the first*, and *Christ the Last*, to be ourselves *the Beginning*, and let Him be *the End*. No, *he hears the Sayings of our Saviour*, he is awakened *to hear* in his Heart and *to understand*, and can't readily satisfy himself and *cry Peace, when there is no Peace*. His first thoughts are, *I don't know the Righteousness of* God, *I am a Stranger to the* Kingdom of Heaven, *I have not yet received it in my Heart, I will therefore not conclude myself a true Christian I will not look upon myself converted, or fancy I am a Child of God, till I can say, surely, in the Lord have I Righteousness.*

He digs deep, and with Tears and inward Longing, and a Thirst insatiable, he looks after a Foundation that can't be shaken, *a Rock* that shall stand *when the Heavens shall wax old, and the Earth perish, and all old Things pass away, and no Place be found for them any more*. Though at times he enjoys many happy Frames, passes some happy Hours in the Company

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of *Children of God*, hears with delight the everlasting Gospel, and often *tastes the Powers of the World to come*, with a sort of Extasy and Rapture not to be expressed, yet he is not satisfied till our *Saviour* is *found* of him, and has *manifested himself* to him, till he can say, *I have found the Lord!* In his deep Wounds he lays his Foundation, and on *his Righteousness* rests fearless and safe. *This is the Corner-stone which the Builders have rejected: This was the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles: This is the Head Stone in all God's Building, whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed*, Ephes. ii. 20. Rom. ix. 33.

On the other Hand, *he is a foolish Man* who without much Thought *builds upon the Sand*. His Work may make a fine Shew and go on fast, but the first swelling Flood, the first high Tide, when *the Rains come* heavy upon it and washes away the Sand, and when *the Wind blows and beats against it, it falls*. Just so it is with a Soul who without understanding our *Saviour*, hears his sayings, and goes and seeks first his own Righteousness; he pleases himself that his sincere Obedience will do, and after he has done all he can he shall get *the Kingdom of Heaven*. He does not *seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, and besides that all is *Sand*, all is *without a Foundation* and Ground; and though a Man may go far, and busy himself in his dry Morality and good Works, as he falsely calls them, he must sooner or later find it will not do, when he stands before the *Judge of all the Earth*. Then when *God* weighs his Prayers, Alms, Duties, Honesty, and Religion, he must see the Hand-writing against him, TEKEL, TEKEL, *Thou art weighed in the Ballance and art found wanting*. This shall be the Hurt of all, this shall be the Ruin and spoiling of the whole, he built without our *Saviour*, he was without the *Righteousness of God*,

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he never found *the Rock*, and perhaps never digged or ſought after Him, but ventured to ſtop ſhort of Him, and to build *without a Founda ion*, and therefore he ſhall ſuffer the Loſs of all, and loſe his own Soul, his Hopes and all he built on that *Sand*.

David has that Character, by way of Eminence among the Prophets, that *he was the Man after God's own Heart*, 1 Sam. xiii. 14. but yet however blameleſs he had lived in other reſpects, however religious and ſtrict, yet he knew no righteouſneſs could avail or help him but the *Righteouſneſs of God*, and therefore he prays, *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant*; he knew he could not ſtand the Trial or be juſtified by his Works, but ſays *I will go out in the Strength of the Lord, and will make mention of thy Righteouſneſs, and thine only*, Pſal. lxxi. 16. and *this was the Salvation and all his Deſire*, when he came to die.

Think then how weighty, and above all other Things this is neceſſary, that *the Kingnom of* Jeſus *and his Righteouſneſs* be found and made the *Corner-ſtone*, the *ſure Foundation* of your Souls. You muſt not ſay, how contrary to this Doctrine many have preached and taught; *let* God *be true and every Man a Lyar*. *The Builders have* now, as well as formerly, *rejected this Stone*, and taught the People to lay firſt the ſandy Foundation of their own Works and Righteouſneſs; but ſuch raſh and giddy Men muſt one Day be aſhamed that they have done ſo, for *they have taken away the Lord, and I don't know where they have laid him*, they have made the preaching of *Jeſus* an *Offence*, and *an Occaſion of ſtumbling*, and *the Blind have led the Blind till both fall into the Ditch*. O that the *Lord* would awaken ſuch Preachers to ſee their Sin, that henceforth they might venture no more to lead the Souls at random, but, like St. *Paul*, preach

Him only, and *know nothing beſides Him and his Righteouſneſs*, that ſo they might be the Means of *ſaving themſelves and thoſe that hear them.* A Miniſter's Wiſdom and Learning, in this reſpect, will be of little Uſe to him, unleſs he has learned of the *Chief Miniſter* that *the Rock is Chriſt*; and if once he has happily found him, he will ſpare no Coſt or Pains in his Power to baffle and throw down all other Things ſet up in our *Saviour*'s room, he will make a *Babel* of Self-righteouſneſs, and as an *Idol* treat every other pretended Good but the *Only Holy One* and his Merits.

The Fall of the *Jewiſh* Church happened this way; *they ſtumbled at the Stumbling-ſtone, they being ignorant of God's Righteouſneſs went about to eſtabliſh their own, ſo did not ſubmit to the Righteouſneſs of God.* Yet St. *Paul* gives them thus far a good Character, *They had a Zeal for God, but not according to Knowledge, they ſought Righteouſneſs but they did not attain it, and wherefore? becauſe they ſought it not in Chriſt, they ſought it not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law*, Rom. ix. 31, 32, 33. and x. 2, 3. In this ſame way many thouſands called *Chriſtians* have fooliſhly built, and been entirely ruined. O that *God* would ſave all that hear me To-day from periſhing this way, and give all ſuch a due Concern about a Matter of ſo great moment, that from henceforth none might reſt till he had found the Lord, *and laid his Foundation deep in the Clefts of that Rock*,

There are two Sorts of People *who build upon the Rock* and ſhall finally be ſaved, the firſt of theſe believe the Doctrine I have been laying down, and with all their Hearts know, *all Works done before the Grace of Chriſt and the Inſpiration of his Spirit are not pleaſant to God*:* They are verily perſuaded, that all Things built upon any other Ground or Baſis, but upon

* *See the 13th Article of the Church of* England.

upon the *Lord*, muſt fall, and therefore they can't reſt or be ſatisfied till they have found him; but then they afterwards deal fooliſhly, for inſtead of *walking in Chriſt Jeſus as they received Him*, under a Senſe of their own Poverty and Impotence, and ſo living daily, and going on and building in his Merits and Sufferings, his Obedience and Travail, his Love and free Salvation, they fancy that they muſt complete his Work with their own Works, and are always aiming at ſome high Eſtate, and to perfect, as it were, his Salvation. Their works are not ſimply and only to glorify our *Saviour*, but with a view to make themſelves ſomewhat better, and out of a legal and beguiled Heart, or rather from a puzzled and perplexed Head, *they ſeek to eſtabliſh their Righteouſneſs* upon the Ground of *Chriſt*'s; and tho' they never attain their Ends, yet by ſuch a fruitleſs and vain Attempt they loſe much, and their Lives are not ſo happy and comfortable in the enjoyment of the *Lord Jeſus* and his Grace; and even theſe are they of whom St. *Paul* ſpeaks, when he ſays, *they have built with Wood, Hay, and Stubble, their Works ſhall be burnt up, and they ſhall ſuffer the Loſs of them*, &c. *but they ſhall be ſaved, yet ſo as by Fire*, 1 Cor. iii. 12, 15. This *fiery Trial* is in another Place yet mentioned, and will ſerve to make the Matter more clear. A Day ſhall come when *the Lord ſhall ſit as a Refiner and Purifier of Silver*, Mal. iii. 2, 3. *His Fire ſhall try every Man's Work of what ſort it is*, that as when a Refiner melts Gold or Silver he burns up the Droſs, or cauſes it to evaporate, ſo our *Saviour*, who will refine and purge the whole *Houſe of Iſrael*, will purge away all thoſe Works done with a ſervile or ſelfiſh View, and what ſavours of Pride, Highneſs, or what is Self-righteouſneſs under another Name, or in Diſguiſe, or what ſerves to exalt

Man, or ſet up the Creature. All this ſhall be burnt up, but the Soul juſtified and grounded upon him, (however in other Matters they may have dealt weakly and fooliſhly) ſhall be ſaved; for what *God* has built upon the *Stone laid in Sion*, ſhall not be loſt, for our *Saviour*'s Honour and Word ſake, *they ſhall be ſaved with an everlaſting Salvation.* But ſuch as I have now deſcribed, through their making ſo much of their Works, and laying ſo little Streſs upon our *Saviour*, often trouble themſelves exceedingly, and unleſs at ſome particular Seaſons of Grace, or in ſome ſweet Frames, they are either very apt to doubt and be heavy, and ſo ſuffer Loſs unſpeakable, or elſe through a ſort of ſpiritual Pride, and forgetting they were *perfect only through the Comelineſs our* Saviour *had put upon them*, they ſhould be ready to think, my own Works and Faithfulneſs have done this, and ſo provoke *God* to ſtrip them and make them naked and bare, as was the Caſe of *Iſrael*, *Ezek.* xvi. 14, *&c.* ſo theſe ſuffer a Loſs alſo, and learn by painful Experience, 'tis beſt to ſit down at *Jeſus*'s Feet meek and lowly, and reſt wholly upon him like a poor Sinner for ever.

The Second Sort of People who build upon *the Rock* and ſhall be ſaved, are ſuch as have deeply felt the Fall and Miſery of their own Souls, and who have learned of the *Holy Spirit* how ruined, helpleſs, and ſpoiled they were by Nature, and who *ſought and found the Rock of Ages, Chriſt Jeſus*, and whom no Joy, Grace, or Bleſſing could exalt, but rather abaſe, and make more and more aſhamed, before his gracious Feet. Theſe are a *People truly zealous of good Works*, and for our *Saviour*'s ſake would rather die than grieve him: They pray, they hear, they love the Ordinances of *Chriſt*, and do joyfully all his Will, his Commandments are not

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grievous to them; they ſhun what they can ſuppoſe would grieve him as a Serpant, hating the very Places where they have ſinned, and *the Garments ſpotted with the fleſh*, but in the Bottom of their Hearts they make no Righteouſneſs of it, no terrible Law has urged them on, or thundering Judgments driven them to their ſtrict Obedience; Love has conſtrained them, and out of a Heart waſhed and made happy through the *Blood of the Lamb*, they have done all their Works, and with Shame have been ſorry that in all Things they have come ſo ſhort and failed; but they live upon the Pardon and free Mercy of *Jeſus*, as at firſt, and know they are *ſaved freely*, and loved, *not for Works of Righteouſneſs that they have done*, nor do they ſtand in the Favour of *God* by means of their goodneſs, but in Faith they ſtand, and thro' Grace are preſerved for his Name ſake, and *built up in the Knowledge and Love of God*: Every Fault or Weakneſs they perceive, brings them nearer to our *Saviour* for Forgiveneſs and teaches them to cleave to Him the more, to love him dearer, and to reſolve to ſtay with Him, and continue his poor and needy Children. Such an one does not want to be high or eminent, or to be eſteemed a Saint, or better than another, but his higheſt Aim is to pleaſe the *Lord that bought him*, his tender Heart inwardly honours and lives to Him, and he enjoys an uninterrupted happy Seaſon with his Redeemer. He gets more and more acquainted with Him, and is more ſolidly built, rooted, and grounded in Him. No forced Concluſions from certain Scriptures, or Conſequences of ſome favourite Doctrine or Scheme of Religion are his Support: He is not edified with Fancies, but with a real Intimacy and Familiarity with our *beſt Friend*, the *Lord Chriſt*, and by

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a ſure Knowledge of his Heart toward Him. This Man *builds with Gold, Silver and precious Stone, and when the Fire ſhall try every Man's Works his ſhall ſtand, and his Works be rewarded* with his divine Maſter's Approbation, *Well done good and faithful Servant*, and he ſhall not loſe *his Crown* of *rejoicing*.

There are alſo two Sorts of fooliſh People who miſs Salvation; the firſt, who hear our *Saviour*'s Sayings, but as lightly regard them as if they were of no Conſequence; and theſe never ſeek after Happineſs, but run on in Sin, in Drunkenneſs, Blaſphemies, Whoredoms, careleſs and debauched Living, and, like *as a Horſe ruſhes into the Battle*, they ruſh into Hell, and theſe are really much to be pitied, though they pity not themſelves. There is yet a nother Sort who are ſerious, and profeſs a religious Life, but ſuperficially and without *digging deep*, and ſearching for the *only Rock* and *ſure Foundation*, which is *Jeſus Chriſt*; they content themſelves in their good Church, their religious Cuſtoms, their pious Deeds, Charity, and Prayers, *&c.* and this ſerves till a time of Trial; but when Death warms them to another World, and the cloſe Thoughts of ſtanding before *God* in ſuch a Righteouſneſs, the feeling no inward Certainty or Confidence of our *Saviour*'s Love, but a ſecret Fear of departing, a miſtruſting all, and finding that Conviction, *Yet lackeſt thou one Thing*, they fail, and begin to cry out for ſome better Ground. Sometimes the *Houſe built upon Sand* ſtands till the *Flood out of the Dragon's Mouth*, which is perſecution, ariſeth, or when Temptations numerous as Drops of *Rain deſcend*, or when every Wind of Doctrine blows againſt it, and then down it falls, and the

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Soul, the cheated and deceived Soul, is left wretched, naked, frighted, and miſerable, and might be told before Men and Angels, *Thou Fool, without a Foundation, thou haſt built upon Sand.*

In both theſe Caſes it is yet ſomewhat tolerable; for a Perſon awakened upon his Death-bed, and convinced that hitherto he has deceived his own Soul, may, and ſhall, when he turns to the *Lord*, find Him a Rock whereon he may truſt, and ſhall thereby eſcape. Alſo one ſhook with Perſecution, or by Temptations, or who by means of ſome powerful Wind of Doctrine ſees his Righteouſneſs, which perhaps for many Years together he had been building up, now thrown down in a Moment, and is in Diſtreſs, and wants *a Reſt for his Soul* may apply to *the Healer of his People*, and find *that Man a Refuge in the ſtormy Wind and Tempeſt, and the Shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land.* But there are Souls who will not be convinced of their Folly till *the great Day, the Day of Deciſion* comes, and then, however they have vaunted and ſtood proudly, however fine and gaudy their ſhew of Piety may appear, if they have not found *Jeſus* in their Hearts, if *they have rejected that Head Stone in the Corner*, and have not *his Righteouſneſs*, tho' they had in Appearance the Holineſs of a Cherub, *it ſhall fall!* the Tempeſt of that Day, the ſhaking of Heaven and Earth, and the Preſence of the Refiner, before whoſe Face *the Angels are charged with Folly, and in whoſe Sight the Heavens are impure*, ſhall amaze them, and they and all their falſe Hopes, their Knowledge, and whatever elſe they could boaſt of, ſhall fall, and *great ſhall be the Fall*: They ſhall tremble and ſhake before our *Saviour*, and ſink down into the Pit with all their Religion, becauſe they deſpiſed *the Elect Stone which God laid in*

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Sion, and would ſooner and rather truſt their own Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs than the Merits and Righteouſneſs of *God our Saviour*. In that Day ſhall it be proved true, *Bleſſed are all they that have put their Truſt in Him.*

Since then *Chriſt is become the Chief Corner-ſtone, the Foundation and Ground of his poor People*, let all here aſk their own Hearts, Am I built upon Him? Have I by Experience a Right to ſay, *The Lord is my Rock? I have found the Lord?* To ſuch as have found Him *he is a precious and a tried Stone*; precious, ſince all who have Him are thereby made ſafe and happy to Eternity. And not only as *God* tried Him, when he laid upon Him all our Sins, and viſited our Iniquities upon Him, and he endured and went thro' the Wrath; and proved a faithful Advocate and Surety of his People; but many thouſand Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, Confeſſors, and Virgins, in all Ages, have reſted and built all upon Him, and found him faithful. Their laſt Hours where Witneſs how he ſtood by them; they could depart rejoicing and fearleſs, nor did any of them depend upon him in vain. *They truſted in Him and were holpen.* They were built upon Him, and neither Fire, nor Warter, nor Perſecutions, nor Temptations, nor Life, nor Death, nor *Satan*, nor *the Gates of Hell prevailed againſt them.* They have overcome, they ſtood and fell not, *becauſe they were built upon the Rock.* The Blood of *Chriſt*, like well-tempered Mortar, bound them together and to Himſelf, and now they help to make *his Temple, his eternal Habitation.*

Many Millions who have preſumptuouſly founded their Hopes, and built on other Foundations, have ſorely felt their Loſs when they came upon a Death-bed; and tho' perhaps before they ſcorned

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to depend upon *Chriſt* and his Merits, and would not be of their Religion who wholly reſt on his Grace, but chuſe rather to confide in their good Life, or repentance, or Duties, or Charity, *&c.* yet when the Terrors of Death came upon them, and they found themſelves launching into Eternity, and juſt going to appear before *God*, finding their Hearts fail, and all their fine and formerly admired Structure totter they have cried out for a *Saviour* and his Blood, and have been glad to die as poor Sinners ſaved by Grace, and joined the happy Company they once deſpiſed; but though this happens daily, and in all Ages, none who have laid their Foundation on the *Rock*, or truſted in *Jeſus*, have thus changed in their laſt Moments. No, Death let it come like a ſweet Sleep upon them, or ruſh on with all the Horrors of Perſecution and bitter Pangs, or Sickneſs, have ſhaken, much leſs overturned, their Confidence in *Chriſt*; they have not repented that they honoured him too much, or made too much of his free Mercy and Merits; nor have they warned others to beware of ſuch a Danger, or found him whom they believed and knew in the World, now leave them to periſh, or forſake them when their Strength failed them. O no! they all have rejoiced in his Salvation, and thought and confeſſed, amidſt all their Weakneſſes, Agonies, and Sickneſſes, how bleſſed they were in having built upon this Rock, and having got *the Moſt High God* for their *Saviour*. O how ſweet and precious is the *Lamb* in a dying Hour! to have Him with us, and to be ſenſible his everlaſting Arms are underneath when we are expiring, and bidding all the World adieu, is above all Things bleſſed. A Soul in this Caſe is not afraid, *he is built upon the Rock and ſhall ſtand.*

May the great Master Builder, our *Lord and Saviour Jesus*, give us *a deep Foundation* in Him, and even when all other Things give way and fail, may we have our eternal Ground and Safety under his Shadow and in his Wounds, and abide unshaken in his Arms and everlasting Love, living and dying, in Time and in Eternity. *Amen.*

A PRAYER.

O MY dear and loving *Saviour*, who art the true Rock and Corner-stone of all the Apostles and Prophets, and in whom they trusted and were saved, bear upon thy Heart the poorest Soul that ever called upon thy Name. From that Glory into which thou art now ascended, and amidst all the Honours and Praises with which thou art now surrounded, forget not me in my low Estate, but remember me now thou art in thy Kingdom.

Thou knowest my sincere Desire to be saved and to be with thee eternally; and lest I should be in any Danger, O my dear Lord and Master direct me to lay my Foundation on the Rock, and let thy Holy Spirit lead me deep into thy Wounds, and settle, root, and ground me therein, that no Power, Tempter, or Storm may be ever able to shake or remove me, World without End.

I pray thee let me not be foolish in thy Eyes in this respect, or satisfy myself with any thing less than the sure Enjoyment of thy Presence and Love in my Heart. Let me experience thy Favour, and be out of Doubt of thy Pardon, and in the truest

Peace

Peace of Mind and continual Fellowſhip with thee, let me be thy Diſciple, and poor but happy Pilgrim in this Life, and paſs my Days in the Aſſurance of my eternal Salvation.

For thy tender Mercies ſake ſuffer me never to be deceived, ſo as to build upon Sand; O rather let my Heart and Soul unfeignedly reſt upon thy Blood and Rightcouſneſs, and even in my laſt Hour, and when thou ſhalt come again to Judgment, let me be found built on the Rock of Ages, and without Fear enter the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and receive the Meſſage of the King of Terrors. Let me undiſmayed hear the Trumpet blow before thee in the Day of thy coming, and ſtand before thee bold as a Lion. Let me appear before thee cloathed in thy Righteouſneſs and wearing thy new Name having the HOLY GHOST till that bleſſed Time, my daily Comforter, bearing Witneſs with my Spirit that I am a Child of God. Grant this Prayer, thou gracious and Almighty Lord God, my only Saviour, for thy Love's Sake. *Amen.*

A HYMN.

1 THE Rock, the precious Corner-ſtone,
My Soul has found, and builds thereon,
And from the Top ſhe ſees
The Glory of the World above,
She takes a Proſpect of the Grove
Of everlaſting Trees.

Here

2 Here out of reach of ev'ry Foe,
She ſtoops and views the World below,
Beholds the deſert Lands,
Where Fiends conſpire like Winds and Rain
And ſwelling Floods, to ſhake in vain,
The Rock on which ſhe ſtands.

3 When high the ſtormy Billows riſe,
And Clouds prevent the clearer Skies,
My Soul finds here a Reſt,
A Hiding-Place till all is o'er,
The Clefts I prove, ſecure and ſure,
Where happy I am bleſt.

4 Within this Rock my Soul deſcries
A thouſand ſacred Rarities,
The Place where *Moſes* was,
When he JEHOVAH's Glory view'd,
The Back-parts of the unſeen God,
As thro' tranſparent Glaſs.

5 Here one may alſo ſtand and ſee
Mount *Tabor* and Mount *Calvery*,
And from this Mountain's Height,
A Soul whoſe Eyes are ſtrong may view
Mount *Sion* and the Armies too,
Upon it cloath'd in white.

6 On this eternal Rock is grav'n
The Names of all who go to Heav'n,
This Stone God try'd and laid,
That all the Church might build thereon,
Chriſt Jeſus is this choſen Stone,
I'll truſt him unafraid.

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F I N I S.